



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
Great Government Through the General Management System – Quality, Timeliness, Value
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

CLASS SPECIFICATION

CLASSIFIED

SUPERVISING CRIMINALIST

Class No. 005734

■ CLASSIFICATION PURPOSE

To supervise, schedule and monitor the laboratory operations of a major division within the Sheriff's Crime Laboratory; and to perform related work.

■ DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS

Supervising Criminalist is a first level, supervising class found with the Sheriff's Department crime laboratory. Incumbents are responsible for maintaining and improving analytical and chemical tests, coordinating and supervising the work of assigned subordinates within a major division of the laboratory. Supervising Criminalist differs from the Crime Lab Manager in that the latter establishes policies, authorizes procedures and ensures that the Crime Laboratory operates at a high level of quality and efficiency. Supervising Criminalist differs from the next lower class, Criminalist III, in that the latter is a lead worker and performs the most complex laboratory tests.

■ FUNCTIONS

The examples of functions listed in the class specification(s) are representative but not necessarily exhaustive or descriptive of any one position in the class(es). Management is not precluded from assigning other related functions not listed herein if such duties are a logical assignment for the position.

Essential Functions:

1. Supervises, coordinates, schedules and monitors the work of assigned professional and technical laboratory personnel.
2. Reviews work requests and allocates resources to ensure timely processing to meet court deadline dates.
3. Reviews laboratory methods, procedures, and equipment to support quality and modernization efforts.
4. Assists in the development of laboratory training programs to ensure state-of-the-art laboratory work.
5. Trains and evaluates personnel.
6. Implements and analyzes internal and external quality assurance efforts to ensure standards are met and maintained.
7. Maintains records of laboratory activities, cases worked, and other statistical data.
8. Assists in the testing and evaluation of new laboratory instrumentation.
9. May examine crime scenes to collect, preserve and analyze physical evidence.
10. Researches the acceptability of new technologies, laboratory methods, and tests.
11. Coordinates the implementation of new techniques and tests with the District Attorney, investigating agencies and the court.
12. Helps implement procedures to insure that laboratory work meets accreditation standards set by professional forensic science laboratory associations.
13. Provides responsive, high quality service to County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public by providing accurate, complete and up-to-date information, in a courteous, efficient and timely manner.

■ KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Principles, methods and techniques of chemistry, physiology and biology in qualitative and quantitative analysis.
- Standard laboratory practices, instruments and nomenclature used in the isolation, determination and identification of physical evidence or biological specimens related to criminalistics.
- Laboratory methods evaluation and development related to the analysis of chemical, biological and physical evidence.

- Operation and maintenance of laboratory instrumentation used for analysis of biological, chemical, narcotic and physical evidence, such as Fourier-Transform Infrared (FTIR) and ultraviolet spectrophotometer, gas chromatograph/mass spectrometer, light and electron microscopy, electrophoresis and elemental analysis instrumentation.
- Common controlled substances, as defined by the Uniform Controlled Substances Act of the Health and Safety Code.
- Laboratory safety practices and regulations.
- Judicial requirements regarding evidence integrity.
- Personal computer hardware, software and operating systems used in laboratory instruments.
- Investigative techniques as applied to collection and preservation of physical evidence.
- Recent developments, literature and sources of information relative to criminalistics and toxicology.
- Principles of employee supervision, training and evaluation.
- DNA testing principles and techniques.
- Principles of chemistry, biology, microbiology and physics applied in criminalistic investigations.
- Rules of evidence and general procedures of civil and criminal practices concerning the physical chain of custody for evidence.
- County customer service objectives and strategies.
- The General Management System in principle and in practice.

Skills and Abilities to:

- Supervise, train and evaluate the work of assigned personnel conducting laboratory analyses and field investigations on physical evidence.
- Administer laboratory quality assurance procedures.
- Evaluate laboratory workload and assign personnel to meet deadlines.
- Perform the most difficult laboratory work to detect, isolate and determine the nature of evidence such as fluids, tissues, drugs, and narcotics.
- Interpret laboratory findings to the court, law enforcement personnel, attorneys and others.
- Act as an expert witness in court and train subordinates to provide expert witness testimony.
- Prepare evidence and exhibits for presentation in court.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with those contacted in the course of work.
- Communicate effectively both in oral and written form.
- Treat County employees, representatives of outside agencies and members of the public with courtesy and respect.
- Assess the customer's immediate needs and ensure customer's receipt of needed services through personal service or referral.
- Exercise appropriate judgment in answering questions and releasing information; analyze and project consequences of decisions and/or recommendations.

■ EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Education, training, and/or experience that demonstrate possession of the knowledge, skills and abilities listed above. Examples of qualifying education/experience are: a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in chemistry, biology, or a closely related field, with completed course work consisting of at least eight (8) semester/twelve (12) quarter units of general chemistry and three (3) semester/four (4) quarter units of quantitative analysis, AND:

1. Two (2) years of experience as a Criminalist III with the County of San Diego; OR,
2. Seven (7) years of comparable, full-time experience conducting a variety of forensic examinations including the explanation and presentation of laboratory tests in a court of law as an expert witness. This experience must have included:
 - a. Four (4) years of professional experience in a law enforcement agency crime laboratory, or in a forensic laboratory, that included chemical and biological tests to identify and analyze fluids, drugs, narcotics, explosives and various type of related matter; AND,
 - b. Proficiency in two (2) of the following areas:
 1. Analysis of solid dose narcotics and dangerous drugs.
 2. Analysis of alcohol content of blood & urine in forensic samples.
 3. Analysis of blood or body fluid for genetic characterization.
 4. Analysis of trace evidence.
 5. Analysis of blood, urine or other materials for drugs and poisons.
 6. Processing crime scenes for physical evidence.
 7. Firearms and tool marks examinations.

Experience must have included the explanation and presentation of laboratory tests in a court of law as an expert witness and demonstrate proficiency in two (2) of the following areas:

1. Serology/DNA.
2. Narcotics analysis.
3. Toxicology.
4. Traffic alcohol.
5. Trace evidence analysis.

6. Crime scene processing.
7. Firearms/toolmark examinations.

Note: Some positions require a master's degree or higher in order to qualify as a Technical Leader under the Federal Forensic DNA Analysis Guidelines.

■ ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The physical characteristics described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of the classification(s). Reasonable accommodation may be made to enable an individual with qualified disabilities to perform the essential functions of a job, on a case-by-case basis.

Continuous upward and downward flexion of the neck. Frequent: sitting, repetitive use of hands to operate computers, printers and copiers. Occasional: walking, standing, bending and twisting of neck, bending and twisting of waist, squatting, simple grasping, reaching above and below shoulder level, and lifting and carrying of files weighing up to 10 pounds.

■ SPECIAL NOTES, LICENSES, OR REQUIREMENTS

License

A valid California class C driver's license, which must be maintained throughout employment in this class, is required at time of appointment, or the ability to arrange necessary and timely transportation for field travel. Employees in this class may be required to use their own vehicle.

Certification/Registration

None Required.

Working Conditions

Incumbents may work irregular hours, weekends, holidays or evenings. Work involves exposure to disease and caustic materials in the handling and analysis of evidence. Office environment; exposure to computer screens.

Background Investigation

Must have a reputation for honesty and trustworthiness. Felony convictions will be disqualifying. Misdemeanor convictions may be disqualifying depending on type, number, severity, and recency. Prior to appointment, candidates will be subject to a thorough background investigation which may include a psychological, polygraph or other examination or test.

Probationary Period

Incumbents appointed to permanent positions in this class shall serve a probationary period of twelve (12) months (Civil Service Rule 4.2.5).

New: July 17, 1980
Revised: December 9, 1998
Reviewed: Spring 2004